

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON

THE AMPHIBIAN GENERIC NAME *ENGYSTOMA*
UNTENABLE.

BY LEONHARD STEJNEGER.

The genus *Engystoma*, as now generally understood, embraces a number of American species, among them our well known southern *E. carolinense*. The term is untenable, however, for this genus.

When Fitzinger instituted the genus in 1826 (*Neue Classif. Rept.*, p. 39) he expressly stated (p. 40) that it was based on Linné's *Rana gibbosa*, that Merrem's *Breviceps*, of 1820, was also based on the same species, but that he preferred his own genus which he alleges was "gleichzeitig aufgestellt." There is no evidence that he published the name *Engystoma* before 1826, however. The later name therefore becomes a synonym of *Breviceps*. That it was so understood by all herpetologists up to 1841 is plain from a perusal of the literature. Cuvier (*Règne Anim.*, 2 ed., II, 1829, p. 112) synonymizes them. So does Wagler (*Syst. Amph.*, 1830, p. 205) who substitutes *Systema* for both of them. So does Tschudi (*Classif. Batr.*, 1838, p. 86) who accepts Wagler's term. Finally, Fitzinger himself, in 1843 (*Syst. Rept.*, p. 33), abandons *Engystoma* and accepts *Systema*. Wagler, as early as 1828, separated the *Rana ovalis* of Schneider monotypically as *Microps* (preoccupied) and Tschudi, 1838, substituted for it *Stenocephalus* (which was also preoccupied).

It was not until 1841 that the confusion began. In that year Duméril and Bibron (*Erpét. Gén.*, vol. 8, p. 740) designated *Rana ovalis* as the type of *Engystoma* and in this they were followed by Guenther and later authors, including Boulenger.

In the face of Fitzinger's original designation this perversion can not be accepted under the International Rules of Zoological Nomenclature and it becomes necessary to select a name for the genus which now erroneously is called *Engystoma*. The two earliest names, as stated above, are preoccupied. The next available term is Fitzinger's *Gastrophryne* based on Duméril and Bibron's *Engystoma rugosum*, which has been considered a synonym of our *E. carolinense*.

The synonymy of the genus will then stand as follows:

Gastrophryne Fitzinger.

- 1828. *Microps* Wagler, Isis, 1828, p. 744 (monotype, *Microps unicolor* = *Rana ovalis* Schneider) (not of Meg., 1823).
- 1838. *Stenocephalus* Tschudi, Classif. Batr., p. 86 (same type) (not of Latr., 1825).
- 1841. *Engystoma* Duméril and Bibron, Erpét. Gén., vol. 8, p. 738 (same type by designation) (not of Fitzinger, 1826).
- 1843. *Gastrophryne* Fitzinger, Syst. Rept., p. 33 (type by original designation, *Engystoma rugosum* Dum. Bibr.).

The species belonging to this genus will stand as follows:

- 1. *Gastrophryne usta* (Cope) Mexico.
- 2. *Gastrophryne carolinensis* (Holbrook) S. E. United States.
- 3. *Gastrophryne texana* (Girard) Texas.
- 4. *Gastrophryne areolata* (Strecker) Texas.
- 5. *Gastrophryne elegans* (Boulenger) Mexico.
- 6. *Gastrophryne ovalis* (Schneider) South America.
- 7. *Gastrophryne microps* (Duméril and Bibron) Brazil, Guiana.
- 8. *Gastrophryne aequatorialis* (Peracca) Ecuador.
- 9. *Gastrophryne albopunctata* (Boettger) Paraguay.
- 10. *Gastrophryne leucosticta* (Boulenger) Sta. Catharina, Brazil.
- 11. *Gastrophryne muelleri* (Boettger) Paraguay.
- 12. *Gastrophryne pictiventris* (Cope) Nicaragua.
- 13. *Gastrophryne borneensis* (Boulenger) Borneo.

As shown above *Engystoma* becomes a synonym of *Breviceps*, and with it must also disappear the family name *Engystomidæ* (and *Engystomatidæ*). The name *Brevicipitidæ*, created by Cope, in 1867, for a smaller group becomes available, however, and may be used. The more familiar *Phryniscidæ* is unavailable since it has been shown that the genus *Phryniscus* belongs to the *Bufo*nidæ.

